A REVIEW OF THE Affairs of *FRANCE*:

With Obſervations on TRANSACTIONS at Home

Thurday, November 8. 1705.

I Am now cloſing my Addreſs to the Houſe of Commons, in laying before that Honourable Houſe, the third *Engine* by which High-Church Malice works in this Nation; and that is, THE PRESS: Not that I have opened the black Scene fully to their View, innumerable Evils yet remain couch'd in the General Practice of this Implacable Party; and innumerable Conſequences attend the furious Spirit of theſe Men, if God and the Wiſdom of our Governours do not reſtrain them.

I am not preſcribing that Reſtraint; eſpecially while I make this Paper ſpeak to my Superiours: Nor ſhould I at laſt make any Eſſay that way, but to anticipate a forward Gentleman, who on every little occaſion cries Fire, and, knowing their Deſert, pretends I am writing to bring the Mob upon the Clergy; but I ſhall fairly explain my ſelf hereafter, and deſcend to Particulars and Methods, when I am talking to them, to whom it is proper to ſpeak of thoſe things.

May it pleaſe the Honourable the Houſe of Commons to hear me with Patience, when I ſay, the moſt Grievous, moſt Exquiſite, and moſt Perverted Piece of Art at this time in the Nation, is THE PRESS.

Joſephus tells us a Story of a Man, who for ſome time before the Siege of that City by the *Romans*, and even to the time of the Siege, went about the Walls, crying, *Wo, Wo, Wo* to *Jeruſalem*; and having in ſpight of the Scourgings and Torments of the *Jews*, continued his Cry, 'till the Siege was begun, he confirm'd the reallity of his Inſpiration, by crying out, *Wo, Wo* to *Jeruſalem*, *Wo* to the City, *Wo* to the Temple, and laſt of all ſays he, *Wo unto my Self*; and that Moment he was ſlain by a Stone from the *Roman* Camp. The Author of this, ſincerely ſenſible of the fatal Miſchief of *this Party-Engine*, *THE PRESS*, cannot forbear to apply to this Honourable Houſe in this Article, with a more than Common Earneſtneſs; and tho' I hereby endeavour to Petition

my Self to Silence; it is not that I think I have, *or that indeed the Cauſe of Peace and Moderation has* the worſt End of the Argument: But, may it pleaſe your Honours to conſider, the Authors on both Sides differ in Circumſtances, in that theſe labour by calm Reaſoning, to confute the Folly of Precipitations and Extrauagancies, nor fit to be nam'd; the other, by an unuſual Stock of Face, impoſe upon Mankind poſitive Falſities, ſo Groſs, and ſo eaſie to be detected, that every impartial Eye diſcerns them.

But as the Nature of ſome Caſes in ſuch as requires more *Aſſurance* than Matter of Fact to ſupport them; ſo even the groſſeſt Lies are uſeful to ſerve a Cauſe, that ſtands upon the ſingle Foundation of Forgery and Deceit. Thus tho' the Shams obtruded upon the World by theſe People in Print, are ſoon diſcovered *here at the Center of National Knowledge*, yet the uſe theſe Fictions are made of in the ſeveral Countries, to blind, hoodwink, and impoſe upon the ignorant People, are infinite and intollerable.

Such as theſe, may it pleaſe your Honourable Houſe to bear with an Inſtance or two, was that infamous Slander raiſed by a Scandalous News-Writer, formerly Cenſur'd and Reprov'd by the Houſe of Commons, upon the *Eaſt-India* Company; affirming, That 46000 *l.* in Bullion, ſent on board the Ship *Neptune*, was *melted out of* Engliſh *Crown Pieces: Such are* innumerable falſe Reports, Party-Suggeſtions, Reproaches, and unjuſt Aſſertions, which the Current Pamphlets of this Age are full of, to vilify, reproach, ſlander and otherwiſe injure the Government, and the moſt faithful Subjects of this Nation; *ſuch are*, Publiſhing that the Grand Jury who cenſur'd a moſt Infamous Libel, call'd *The Memorial*, were pack'd by Diſſenting Sheriffs; and ſuch are the ſeveral Falſities, for which ſeveral of the Authors wait the *too defective* Juſtice of this Nation, *whoſe Laws* ſeem to look up to your Aſſembly for ſome additional Clauſes to render them more effectual for the ſuppreſſing this growing Miſchief, and for puniſhing the guilty.

The Miſchiefs of *the Preſs* are of ſo many ſorts, and in ſuch various Manners ſpread themſelves over this Nation, that it is impoſſible to expreſs the Fatal Particulars, while the *Gentlemen-Agents of this Party*, moſt induſtriouſly, by means eſpecially of ſuch of the Clergy, who ſhow their unhappy Zeal againſt their Country, ſpread about every Pamphlet, calculated for the enflaming this unhappy Nation, with a Zeal far Superiour to the Propagation of their more proper Employment.

This appears in their eager embracing every thing that ſavours of that *Gall and Bitterneſs*, with which they appear too forward to infect the Nation; and when an Eſſay of the like Nature was made on purpoſe to diſcover the Truth of this Temper; How eagerly did they embrace the *to the Author only unhappy* Propoſal, *Of the Shorteſt Way with the Diſſenters?*

With how much Pleaſure do they now read over a Trayterous Pamphlet, which no Proteſtant can look on without the utmoſt Deteſtation; whoſe Author dares not ſhow his Face, and the Inſolence, Falſity and Malignancy of which makes every impartial Ear ſtart with Surprize to think that Gentlemen who call themſelves Proteſtants, ſhould not bluſh to own it? a Book whoſe Compoſition needs no Addition to recommend it to your Cenſure, but the Approbation it has met with from ſome Gentlemen, who recommend it to their Pariſhioners, as a Book *no Man ought to be without*, merits your ſerious Application, and ſeems to ſollicite the Nation to take care of themſelves.

But I am not deſigning to fill your Honourable Houſe with the various and unhappy Inſtances of this miſchievous Artifice, for the ſpreading Diſaffection and Party-fire in the Nation, but am humbly and earneſtly ſoliciting your Honours, to take into Conſideration the thing it ſelf, how diſhonourable it is in a Government, to have the Subjects permitted to print every malitious and embroiling Notion, under Allegorick Titles, and in the Dark; concealing the Authors, and leaving even Juſtice it ſelf to be Defied, Buffoon'd and Inſulted to her Face, which, when once done, the Party play all the Legerdemain in the World to propagate them, by pretending Anſwers, by mocking Titles, *and the like*; ſo that the more the Government ſhows its Reſentment at ſuch Inſolence, the more the Party ſpread the poiſon'd Rage, and prompt that native Curioſity

sity of the Times; *to see any thing the more eagerly for its being forbidden.*

Governments in all Ages have forbid Writers to intermeddle with the Soveraign Debates of the Nation; such as the Titles, Succession, and Fundamentals of the Crown. In our Time nothing escapes the Fury of the Press. The Title and Person of the Queen, while her Majesty in the quiet Possession, does all her Subjects all manner of Right; the one suffers daily Disputes, the other daily Affronts, while an abominable Fiction of a Succession, *Jure Divino, tho' no Prince in the World can claim it*, is set up, and in Bundles of inveterate Rehersals handed about the Nation, if possible, to lessen and invalidate that Title to the Crown, which her Majesty holds by the best Claim, and upon the most legal Foundation in the World.

Religion, may it please your Honours to reflect, calls aloud to you to rid her of eternal Crouds of *Blasphemous Pamphleteers*, who assault Heaven, Death, the Soul, deny Principles, forge Syffems, invert Creation, and bully their Maker.

The Nation groans under the Load of of this voluminous Impertinence; eternal Clamours are in every News-house, and in every Society; every hour some new Comet appears in the *Horizon of Letters*, born of no visible Parent, that bids Battle to Reason, Law, Nature, Policy, and the whole Nation; these Monsters, may it please your Honours, are generally recommended for their extravagant Dress, scare the Ignorant World, amuse Mankind, and possess the Multitude, with as many various sorts of Devils, as the several Corrupted Fancies of Men, form to themselves, from the False Images they conceive of Publick things; but all of them Embarrass Makind, with Prejudices against the Government, or the several Parties they Respect, and tend to Create a general Disquiet, and Uneasiness in the Nation.

It would be endless to Repeat the Unhappy Broils, and nameless Mischiefs which attend this divided Nation, fomented and encreas'd by busie Emissaries, who supply the defect of their own Capacities to do Evil, by Mercenary Hirelings; who for Bread Sell the Nation, and debate not what Fires they Kindle, or what they Quench, so they can gratifie the Party for whom they act, and bring to pass the Publick Confusion they aim at.

Never was Nation in the World, so intollerably worried from the *Press*; the Strife is come up to that heighth, that nothing but your Powerful Interposition can Suppress it; the Evil is grown Capital, and whether it may reach, God only knows.

Treason against God, and Treason against Man; Blasphemy, Rebellion, Slander, and all the pointed Evils that Man can put into Print, sally out into the World every day; Insolent Men Lampoon their Maker, and an Unlimited Press issues out the Spurious Excrement of the Brain without any Regard; thus God, Government his immediate Ordinance, and Governours his appointed Representatives, suffer intollerable Insults, from this Pernicious Latitude of the *Press*.

I am therefore a most Humble Petitioner to this Honourable House, to apply some suited Cure to this Evil, at least that nothing Profane, nothing in Defyance of the Government of him to whom we owe our Homage, may dare to shew it self in a Countrey of Protestants; That whoever dares to put his Finger into the Fire of the Nations Contention, may feel the Heat, be burnt, and learn from his own Harm to beware. That no Authors *in nubibus* may fight in the dark with the Government, Constitution, Peace, Moderation, and with every Good thing; and having perform'd the Mischief, avoid the punishment: These, may it please this Honourable House to reflect, are Incendiaries in a Cloud; They are like *Guy Faux* with his Lanthorn and Candle, walking among the Barrels of Gun-Powder, and watching the Fatal Moment to blow up the Nation.

To enumerate Particulars of these *Paper Squadrons*, is needless to inform your Assembly; the thing being so plain, a proper Restraint upon the Exorbitant Loosness of the Press, can want no Arguments to prove its Necessity; for the ruinous Consequences are but too obvious: And unless it meet with some Check from your Power, who knows to what Lengths it may run! And the just Apprehensions good Men have of it, will no doubt make this Proposal rational.

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The Good some People may have done this way, whence does it arise, but from the Mischief first done, to make that good Necessary; which Mischief once prevented, that Good becomes no more needful or significant; and for this Reason I am an Humble Petitioner, that Universal Pen and Ink Strife, may dye under your hands, as the first Happy step to, and Blessed Presage of that general Peace, which I trust God Almighty, will yet bestow upon these Nations.

As to the Blow this will be to this Paper, and to the Pen of its Author; I, with the utmost freedom in the World, lay it down a free Sacrifice to Peace; it began its concern in the Affairs of *England*, with a Vehement Exhortation to Peace, it has ever since pursued that Blessed, Healing, Quieting Calming Design; and it shall gladly dye a Martyr for Peace: As therefore its Humble Author, is a sincere Petitioner for Peace; he entreats your Honours, that whatever Schemes for the continuance of this Paper are before him, and however useful they may be, this Paper may rather fall, in the general Conflagation of the Press, than that Publick Good should be Omitted, that Peace may Triumph over this Nation, and all the little Artifices of Men to Embroil us, may be Check'd by that Authority which alone can do it.

How Happy, how Calm, how Quiet would our Society, our Conversation, and all the Nation look, if this Contention of Parties was once at an end! and as the Limiting, Restraining, and Ascertaining the *Press*, would be a great step to it; I close this Humble Address with that Article, as a thing that carries with it Innumerable Advantages to this Nation, in which nothing is now so Lawless, so Irregular, so Mischievous, so Insolent, so Scandalous; and yet so easie to be Effected, as the Author of this is ready, if call'd to it, to Demonstrate.

Books are Printed by no body, and Wrote by every body; one Man Prints another Man's Works, and calls them his own; again, another Man Prints his own, and calls them another Man's. *A.* is Loaded with *B*'s Crimes, and *B.* Applauded, with *A*'s Virtues——— *A.* Prints a Lampoon, and lays it to *C*; *C.* Prints *D*'s Works, and sets *E*'s Name to them; continual Roberies, Piracies, and Invations of Property, range among the Occupation. One Man Studies Seven Year, to bring a finish'd Peice into the World, and a Pyrate Printer, Reprints his Copy immediately, and Sells it for a quarter of the Price; one Prints a Book and is Punish'd for it, and another shall Reprint it, and Sell it in the Face of the Government and get Money for it.

These things call for an Act of Parliament, and that so loud, as I hope will not be deny'd; that so Property of Copies may be secur'd to Laborious Students, to the Encouragement of Letters and all useful Studies; all manner of State Pedants be Suppres's'd; Publick Affronts upon the Government Condemn'd and entirely Crush'd, Party Strife, and Pen and Ink Battels ended, and all sorts of Contentious Papers, *Memorial*'s, *Cassandra*'s, *Woolf's Strip'd*, *Faction Display'd*, *Moderation Display'd*, and all the Rabble, of Nameless Trumpery may Vanish from the Land; and having neither *Rehersals*, *Politick Mercury's*, *Observators*, or *Reviews*, to debate the Publick Matters; the Government, proceeding by the Rules of Peace, Moderation and Justice, may meet with no Obstruction, from the Crouds of Mountebank States-Men, who Print their Weekly-Bills, and are Eternally quacking upon the Nation.

And that this Author and his Paper may both move the Party-Scriblers to Peace, and make way for that Law, he Humbly moves may be pass'd, for that end, he Humbly shews them an Example, lays down before them, and puts an end to the long Discourse of Peace he has been upon; firmly believing, God has heard the Prayers of this Distress'd Nation, and has sent them such a Representative, as will fix her Peace beyond the Attempts of Men, and Devils to interrupt.

Pursuant to this Resolution, this Paper, after a Serious and Humble Address, to the Convocation in some particular Articles relating to Religious Reconciliation, purposes to reassume the so long forgotten Article of Trade, and so by degrees will come back to its Title of being, *a REVIEW, of the Affairs of* FRANCE.

ADVERTISEMENTS.

THE Author of this Paper residing at present very remote from *London*, the *Review* miscarried the last Post, and was too late to be printed, which 'tis hoped the Reader will excuse; Care being taken to prevent the like for the future.